

## Biden unveils plan for Supreme Court changes, says U.S. stands at 'breach' as public confidence sinks



The Supreme Court is pictured, June 30, 2024, in Washington.

Associated Press

By **AAMER MADHANI** and **COLLEEN LONG**

Associated Press

**AUSTIN, Texas (AP)** — President Joe Biden has unveiled a long-awaited proposal for changes at the U.S. Supreme Court, calling on Congress to establish term limits and an enforce-

able ethics code for the court's nine justices. He's also pressing lawmakers to ratify a constitutional amendment limiting presidential immunity.

The White House on Monday detailed the contours of Biden's court proposal, one that appears to have little chance of being approved by

a closely divided Congress with just 99 days to go before Election Day. Still, Democrats hope it'll help focus voters as they consider their choices in a tight election. The likely Democratic nominee, Vice President Kamala Harris, who has sought to frame her race against Republi-

can ex-President Donald Trump as "a choice between freedom and chaos," quickly endorsed the Biden proposal.

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# Biden unveils plan for Supreme Court changes, says U.S. stands at 'breach' as public confidence sinks

Continued from Front

The White House is looking to tap into the growing outrage among Democrats about the court, which has a 6-3 conservative majority, issuing opinions that overturned landmark decisions on abortion rights and federal regulatory powers that stood for decades.

Liberals also have expressed dismay over revelations about what they say are questionable relationships and decisions by some members of the conservative wing of the court that suggest their impartiality is compromised.

"I have great respect for our institutions and separation of powers," Biden argues in a Washington Post op-ed published Monday. "What is happening now is not normal, and it undermines the public's confidence in the court's decisions, including those impacting personal freedoms. We now stand in a breach."

Harris, in a statement, said the reforms being proposed are needed because "there is a clear crisis of confidence facing the Supreme Court."

Republican House Speaker Mike Johnson called the proposal a "dangerous gambit" that would be "dead on arrival in the House."

The president planned to speak about his proposal later Monday during an address at the LBJ Presidential Library in Austin, Texas, to mark the 60th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act.

Biden in a brief exchange with reporters soon after arriving in Texas ahead of his address shrugged off Johnson's pronouncement that the proposal is going nowhere. "I think that's what he is — dead on arrival," Biden offered. He added that he would "figure out a way" to get it done.

Biden is calling for doing away with lifetime appointments to the court. He says Congress should pass legislation to establish a system in which the sitting president would appoint a justice every two years to



President Joe Biden arrives at the White House from Camp David, Sunday, July 28, 2024.

Associated Press

spend 18 years in service on the court. He argues term limits would help ensure that court membership changes with some regularity and adds a measure of predictability to the nomination process.

He also wants Congress to pass legislation establishing a court code of ethics that would require justices to disclose gifts, refrain from public political activity and recuse themselves from cases in which they or their spouses have financial or other conflicts of interest.

Biden also is calling on Congress to pass a constitutional amendment reversing the Supreme Court's recent landmark immunity ruling that determined former presidents have broad immunity from prosecution. That decision extended the delay in the Washington criminal case against Trump on charges he plotted to overturn his 2020 presidential election loss and all but ended prospects the former president could be tried before the November election.

Most Americans supported some form of age limit for Supreme Court justices in an AP-NORC poll from August 2023. Two-thirds wanted Supreme Court justices to be required to retire by a certain age. Democrats were more likely than Re-

publicans to favor a mandatory retirement age, 77% to 61%. Americans across age groups tend to agree on the desire for age limits — those age 60 and over were as likely as any other age group to be in favor of this limit for Supreme Court justices.

The first three justices who would potentially be affected by term limits are on the right. Justice Clarence Thomas has been on the court for nearly 33 years. Chief Justice John Roberts has served for 19 years, and Justice Samuel Alito has served for 18.

Supreme Court justices served an average of about 17 years from the founding until 1970, said Gabe Roth, executive director of the group Fix the Court. Since 1970, the average has been about 28 years. Both conservative and liberal politicians alike have espoused term limits. An enforcement mechanism for the high court's code of ethics, meanwhile, could bring the Supreme Court justices more in line with other federal judges, who are subject to a disciplinary system in which anyone can file a complaint and have it reviewed. An investigation can result in censure and reprimand. Last week, Justice Elena Kagan called publicly for

creating a way to enforce the new ethics code, becoming the first justice to do so.

Still, when it comes to the Supreme Court, creating an ethics code enforcement mechanism isn't as easy as it sounds.

The attorney general has always had the power to enforce violations of the financial and gift disclosure rules but has never apparently used that power against federal judges, said Stephen Gillers, a legal ethics expert at NYU School of Law.

The body that oversees lower court judges, meanwhile, is headed up by Roberts, "who might be reluctant to use whatever power the conference has against his colleagues," Gillers wrote in an email.

The last time Congress ratified an amendment to the Constitution was 32 years ago. The 27th Amendment, ratified in 1992, states that Congress can pass a bill changing the pay for members of the House and the Senate, but such a change can't take effect until after the next November elections are held for the House. Trump has decried court reform as a desperate attempt by Democrats to "Play the Ref."

"The Democrats are attempting to interfere in the

Presidential Election, and destroy our Justice System, by attacking their Political Opponent, ME, and our Honorable Supreme Court. We have to fight for our Fair and Independent Courts, and protect our Country," Trump posted on his Truth Social site this month.

There have been increasing questions surrounding the ethics of the court after revelations about some of the justices, including that Thomas accepted luxury trips from a GOP megadonor.

Justice Sonia Sotomayor, who was appointed during the Obama administration, has faced scrutiny after it surfaced her staff often prodded public institutions that hosted her to buy copies of her memoir or children's books.

Alito rejected calls to step aside from Supreme Court cases involving Trump and Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection defendants despite a flap over provocative flags displayed at his homes that some believe suggested sympathy to people facing charges over storming the U.S. Capitol to keep Trump in power. Alito says the flags were displayed by his wife.

Leonard Leo, co-chairman of the conservative and libertarian Federalist Society, said changes proposed by Biden are about "Democrats destroying a court they don't agree with."

"No conservative justice has made any decision in any big case that surprised anyone, so let's stop pretending this is about undue influence," said Leo, who assisted the Trump administration with the selections and confirmations of Justices Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh.

The announcement marks a remarkable evolution for Biden, who as a candidate had been wary of calls to reform the high court. But over the course of his presidency, he has become increasingly vocal about his belief that the court has abandoned mainstream constitutional interpretation. □



# Trump agrees to be interviewed as part of an investigation into his assassination attempt, FBI says

By ERIC TUCKER

Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Former President Donald Trump has agreed to be interviewed by the FBI as part of an investigation into his attempted assassination in Pennsylvania earlier this month, a special agent said on Monday in disclosing how the gunman prior to the shooting had researched mass attacks and explosive devices. The expected interview with the 2024 Republican presidential nominee is part of the FBI's standard protocol to speak with victims during the course of its criminal investigations. The FBI said on Friday that Trump was struck in the ear by a bullet or a fragment of one during the July 13 assassination attempt at a campaign rally in Butler, Pennsylvania.

"We want to get his perspective on what he observed," said Kevin Rojek, the special agent in charge of the FBI's Pittsburgh field office. "It is a standard victim interview like we would do for any other victim of crime, under any other circumstance." Through more than 450 interviews, the FBI has fleshed out a portrait of the gunman, Thomas Matthew Crooks, that reveals him to be a "highly intelligent" but reclusive 20-year-old whose



Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, listens as U.S. Secret Service Director Kimberly Cheatle testifies before the House Oversight and Accountability Committee about the attempted assassination of former President Donald Trump at a campaign event in Pennsylvania, at the Capitol in Washington, Monday, July 22, 2024.

primary social circle was his family and who maintained few friends and acquaintances throughout his life, Rojek said. Even in online gaming platforms that Crooks visited, his interactions with peers appeared to have been minimal, the FBI said.

His parents have been "extremely cooperative," with the investigation, Rojek said. They have said they had no advance knowledge of the shooting, a statement the FBI considers credible.

The FBI has not uncovered a

motive as to why he chose to target Trump, but investigators believe the shooting was the result of extensive planning, including the purchase under an alias in recent months of chemical precursors that investigators believe were used to create the explosive devices found in his car and his home, and the deployment of a drone about 200 yards (180 meters) from the rally site in the hours before the event in an apparent act of surveillance. The day before the shooting, the FBI says, Crooks visited

a local shooting range and practiced with the gun that would be used in the attack. After the shooting, authorities found two explosive devices in Crooks' car and a third in his room at home. The devices recovered from the car consisting of ammunition boxes filled with explosive material with wires, receivers and ignition devices were capable of exploding but did not because the receivers were in the "off" position, Rojek said. How much damage they could have done is unclear.

The FBI has said that Crooks had shown an online interest in prominent public figures, searching online for information about individuals including President Joe Biden. In addition, Rojek said, Crooks looked up information about mass shootings, improvised explosive devices, power plants and the attempted assassination in May of Slovakia's populist Prime Minister Robert Fico.

FBI Director Christopher Wray told Congress last week that on July 6, the day Crooks registered to attend the Trump rally, he googled: "How far away was Oswald from Kennedy?" That's a reference to Lee Harvey Oswald, the shooter who killed President John F. Kennedy from a sniper's perch in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

New details, meanwhile, were emerging about law enforcement security lapses that preceded the shooting, with Sen. Chuck Grassley, a Republican on the Senate Judiciary Committee, releasing text messages from members of the Beaver County Emergency Services Unit that showed how local officers had communicated with each other about a suspicious-looking man who turned out to be Crooks lurking around more than an hour before the shooting. □

Associated Press

## American flags should be born in the USA now, too, Congress says

By PATRICK WHITTLE

Associated Press

Soon, Old Glory will have to be born in the land of the free and not merely flying over it.

Congress has passed a proposal to require the federal government to purchase only American flags that have been completely manufactured in the U.S. The U.S. imports millions of American flags from overseas, mostly from China, and the sponsors of the proposal said it's time for American flags to originate in the country they represent.

Supporters of the proposal, led by Republican Sen. Susan Collins of Maine and

Democratic Sen. Sherrod Brown of Ohio, said the change is more than just symbolic they believe it will support American jobs and manufacturers while preserving the nation's most recognized banner.

"The American flag serves as a symbol of our identity, resolve, and values as one people. To honor its significance, the federal government should only use flags entirely manufactured in the United States," Collins said.

Supporters of the proposal said Monday that they expect the measure to be signed into law soon. It was sent to President Joe Biden on Thursday.

Federal rules currently require the government to buy flags that contain half U.S.-made materials, supporters of the proposal said. The rule change, called the "All American Flag Act," requires government-purchased flags to be produced entirely with American-made materials as well as manufactured in the U.S.

The value of U.S. flag imports in 2015 was well over \$4 million, according to federal data. The vast majority of those imports came from China, supporters of the rule change said.

In 2017, the U.S. imported some 10 million American flags, and 99.5% of them

came from China, supporters of the proposal said. Those figures include all American flags imported

into the country and not just those purchased by the federal government. □



Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, speaks in front of American flags during the Congressional Gold Medal ceremony in honor of "Rosie the Riveter", Wednesday, April 10, 2024, on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Associated Press



# Former NRA chief says appointing a financial monitor would be 'putting a knife' into the gun group

By JAKE OFFENHARTZ

Associated Press

**NEW YORK (AP)** — The former head of the National Rifle Association, Wayne LaPierre, told a New York judge on Monday that the appointment of an independent monitor to oversee the gun rights group's finances would be "equivalent to putting a knife straight through the heart of the organization and twisting it."

LaPierre's forceful opposition to the court-appointed oversight mechanism came on the final day of arguments in the second phase of a civil case that New York Attorney General Letitia James brought against the NRA. Following the trial's first phase earlier this year, a jury found LaPierre and another deputy liable for mispending millions of dollars on personal expenses. James is seeking an independent monitor to oversee the group's finances and compliance with whistleblower policies. She is also seeking to bar LaPierre, the organization's mouthpiece for decades, from returning to the NRA.

In brief testimony Monday, LaPierre described the ap-



Wayne LaPierre, former CEO of the National Rifle Association walks in the hallway at civil court in New York, Monday, July 15, 2024.

pointment of a monitor as an existential threat to the group because it would send a message to prospective members and donors that the NRA was "being surveilled by this attorney general in New York."

If the monitor is appointed, he said, "General James will have achieved her objective to fulfill that campaign promise of, in effect, dis-

solving the NRA for a lack of money and a lack of members."

LaPierre also told the judge that a ban on his involvement in the NRA would violate his First Amendment rights by preventing him from "being a voice for this organization in terms of its political advocacy."

In her closing statements, an attorney for the NRA, Sarah

Rogers, said the group had no plans to rehire LaPierre, even as she described him as a "visionary leader who commanded a lot of respect and deference." She said the group has implemented strong internal controls that made the appointment of a monitor unnecessary.

LaPierre served as the group's CEO and executive vice president for more than

three decades. He resigned in January on the eve of the first phase of the trial.

Those proceedings cast a spotlight on the leadership, culture and financing of the organization, with state lawyers accusing LaPierre of siphoning millions of dollars from the organization to fund his lavish lifestyle, including trips on private jets and other personal gifts.

The jury ordered LaPierre to repay almost \$4.4 million to the organization, while the NRA's retired finance chief, Wilson "Woody" Phillips, was ordered to pay back \$2 million.

The second phase of the proceeding is a bench trial, meaning there is no jury and the judge will hand down the verdict.

The decision is expected to come as soon as Monday. Earlier this month, Jeffrey Tenenbaum, a lawyer testifying for the state as an expert in nonprofit law, said the NRA had made some strides toward transparency but could backslide without the appointment of an independent monitor. He described the organization's policy manual as "a dumpster fire." □

Associated Press

## Chinese glass maker says it wasn't target of raid at US plant featured in Oscar-winning film

**MORaine, Ohio (AP)** — A Chinese automotive glass maker says it was not the target of a federal investigation that temporarily shut down production last

week at its Ohio plant, the subject of the Oscar-winning Netflix film "American Factory".

The investigation was focused on money laun-

dering, potential human smuggling, labor exploitation and financial crimes, Homeland Security agent Jared Murphey said Friday. Fuyao Glass America said it was told by authorities that a third-party employment company was at the center of the criminal investigation, according to a filing with the Shanghai Stock Exchange.

Agents with the Department of Homeland Security, FBI and Internal Revenue Service, along with local authorities, carried out federal search warrants Friday at the Fuyao plant in Moraine and nearly 30 other locations in the Dayton area.

"The company intends to cooperate fully with the investigation," Lei Shi, Fuyao

Glass America community relations manager, said in a statement to the Dayton Daily News. Messages seeking comment were left with the company on Monday. Production was stopped temporarily Friday, but operations resumed near the end of the day, the statement said.

Fuyao took over a shuttered General Motors factory a decade ago and eventually hired more than 2,000 workers to make glass for the automotive industry. The company, which received millions in tax breaks and incentives from the state and local governments, has said the Ohio plant was the world's largest auto glass production facility.

In 2019, a production com-

pany backed by Barack and Michelle Obama released "American Factory." The film, which won a 2020 Oscar for best feature-length documentary, looked at issues including the rights of workers, globalization and automation. Workers voted overwhelmingly against unionizing in 2017 after some employees complained about unsafe workplace conditions, arbitrary policies and unfair treatment on the job. Earlier that year, Fuyao agreed to pay a \$100,000 penalty after the Occupational Safety and Health Administration cited the company for alleged violations involving machine safety, electrical hazards and a lack of personal protective gear. □



Stacks of glass panes are shown during a grand opening tour of the Fuyao Glass America plant, Friday, Oct. 7, 2016, in Moraine, Ohio.

Associated Press



## 2 children dead and 9 others injured in stabbings in England, police say; 2 adults also wounded

**LONDON (AP)** — A stabbing Monday at a children's dance class in northwest England killed two children and wounded 11 other people, police said, and officers arrested a 17-year-old boy and seized a knife after the bloody rampage. Nine children and two adults were wounded in the attack in Southport, a seaside town near Liverpool, Merseyside Police said. Six children and both adults were in critical condition.

Police Chief Constable Serena Kennedy said the wounded adults had "bravely" tried to protect the children during the "ferocious" attack.

"The offender, who was armed with a knife, walked into the premises and started to attack those inside," Kennedy said. "We believe that the adults who were injured were trying to protect the children at the time they were attacked." A witness described seeing bloodied children running from the class that was held for children aged about 6 to 11 on the first day of summer school vacation. An advertisement for the event promised "a morn-



**Police secure the area, where a man has been detained and a knife has been seized after a number of people were injured in a reported stabbing, in Southport, Merseyside, England, Monday July 29, 2024.**

ing of Taylor Swift-themed yoga, dance and bracelet making."

Kennedy said the motive for the attack is unclear. Police said earlier that detectives were not treating the attack as terror-related. Bare Varathan, who owns a shop nearby, said he saw at least seven kids injured and bleeding outside a nursery.

"They were in the road, running from the nursery," Varathan said. "They had been stabbed, here, here, here, everywhere," he said indicating neck, back and chest.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer called the attack "horrendous and deeply shocking."

Merseyside Police said officers were called at about

noon to an address in Southport, a seaside town of about 100,000 people near Liverpool. It called it a "major incident" but said there was no wider threat to the public.

The suspect, who has not been identified, lived in a village about 5 miles (8 kilometers) from the site of the attack, police said.

Ryan Carney, who lives with

his mother in the street, said his mother saw emergency workers carrying children "covered in red, covered in blood."

She said she could see the stab wounds in the backs of the children."

"All this stuff never really happens around here," he said. "You hear of it, stabbings and stuff like that in major cities, your Manchesters, your Londons. This is sunny Southport. That's what people call it. The sun's out. It's a lovely place to be."

Britain's worst attack on children occurred in 1996, when 43-year-old Thomas Hamilton shot 16 kindergarten pupils and their teacher dead in a school gymnasium in Dunblane, Scotland. The U.K. subsequently banned the private ownership of almost all handguns. Mass shootings and murders with firearms are rare in Britain, where knives were used in about 40% of homicides in the year to March 2023. Several headline-grabbing attacks and a recent rise in knife crime have stoked anxieties and led to calls for the government to do more to clamp down on bladed weapons. □

Associated Press

## North Korean officials seek medicines for Kim's obesity-related health problems, Seoul says

By **HYUNG-JIN KIM**

Associated Press

**SEOUL, South Korea (AP)** — North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has regained weight and appears to have obesity-related health problems such as high blood pressure and diabetes, and his officials are looking for new medicines abroad to treat them, South Korea's spy agency told lawmakers on Monday.

The 40-year-old Kim, known for heavy drinking and smoking, comes from a family with a history of heart problems. Both his father and grandfather, who ruled North Korea before his 2011 inheritance of power, died of heart issues.

Some observers said Kim, who is about 170 centimeters (5 feet, 8 inches) tall and previously weighed 140 kilograms (308 pounds), appeared to have lost a large amount of weight in 2021, likely from changing his diet. But recent state media footage show he has regained the weight.

On Monday, the National Intelligence Service, South Korea's main spy agency, told lawmakers in a closed-door briefing that Kim is estimated to weigh about 140 kilograms (308 pounds) again and belongs to a high-risk group for heart disease, according to Lee Seong Kweun, one of the lawmakers.

Lee said the NIS told law-

makers that Kim has shown symptoms of high blood pressure and diabetes since his early 30s. Another lawmaker, Park Sunwon, said the NIS believes Kim's obesity is linked to his drinking, smoking and stress.

Lee and Park quoted the NIS as saying it obtained intelligence that North Korean officials have been trying to get new medicines abroad for Kim's suspected high blood pressure and diabetes.

North Korea is one of the most secretive countries in the world, and there is virtually no way for outsiders to know Kim's exact health conditions. The NIS also has a spotty record in confirming developments in North

Korea. Kim's health is the focus of keen attention outside North Korea since he hasn't formally anointed a successor who would

take charge of the country's advancing nuclear arsenal targeting the United States and its allies if he was incapacitated. □



**North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un, left, walks together with Russian President Vladimir Putin, right, during Putin's departure ceremony at an international airport outside Pyongyang, North Korea, June 19, 2024.**

Associated Press



# Entrenched incumbent Maduro is declared winner of Venezuela's disputed presidential election

By JOSHUA GOODMAN and REGINA GARCIA CANO  
Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)

— Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro was formally declared the winner of his country's disputed presidential election Monday, a day after the political opposition and the entrenched incumbent both claimed victory in the contest.

The National Electoral Council, which is loyal to Maduro's ruling party, announced his victory, handing him a third six-year term as the leader of an economy recovering from collapse and a population desperate for change. The ministers of defense, communications, technology and the head of the National Assembly were among those in attendance who applauded.

"We have never been moved by hatred. On the contrary, we have always been victims of the powerful," Maduro said in the nationally televised ceremony. "An attempt is being made to impose a coup d'état in Venezuela again of a fascist and counterrevolutionary nature."

"We already know this movie, and this time, there will be no kind of weakness," he added, saying that Venezuela's "law will be respected." There was no immediate comment from the opposition, which had vowed to defend its votes. Opposition leaders planned to hold a news conference later in the day.

As Maduro spoke, demonstrators began to gather at a few points in Caracas, the capital, and some attempted to block freeways, including one that connects it with a port city where the country's main international airport is.

Officials delayed the release of detailed vote tallies from Sunday's election after proclaiming Nicolás Maduro the winner with 51% of the vote, compared with 44% for retired diplomat Edmundo González. The competing claims set up a high-stakes standoff.

"Venezuelans and the entire world know what hap-



Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro attends a ceremony at the National Electoral Council (CNE) that certifies him as the winner of the presidential election in Caracas, Venezuela, Monday, July 29, 2024.

Associated Press

pened," González said. But he and his allies asked supporters to remain calm and called on the government to avoid stoking conflict.

Several foreign governments, including the U.S. and the European Union, held off recognizing the election results.

After failing to oust Maduro during three rounds of demonstrations since 2014, the opposition put its faith in the ballot box. The elections were among the most peaceful in recent memory, reflecting hopes that Venezuela could avoid bloodshed and end 25 years of single-party rule.

The country sits atop the world's largest oil reserves and once boasted Latin America's most advanced economy. But after Maduro took the helm, it tumbled into a free fall marked by plummeting oil prices, widespread shortages of basic goods and hyperinflation of 130,000%.

U.S. oil sanctions sought to force Maduro from power after his 2018 reelection, which dozens of countries condemned as illegitimate. But the sanctions only accelerated the exodus of some 7.7 million Venezuelans who have fled their crisis-stricken nation.

The opposition's call for calm partly reflected protest

fatigue among voters, who polls show are in no rush to upend their lives by taking to the streets as they have previously.

Voters lined up as early as Saturday evening to cast ballots, boosting the opposition's hopes it was about to break Maduro's grip on power.

The official results came as a shock to many who had celebrated, online and outside a few voting centers, what they believed was a landslide victory for González.

"I'm so happy," said Merling Fernández, a 31-year-old bank employee, as a representative for the opposition campaign walked out of a voting center in a working-class neighborhood of Caracas to announce results showing González with more than double Maduro's vote count. Dozens of people standing nearby erupted in an impromptu rendition of the national anthem.

"This is the path toward a new Venezuela," added Fernández, holding back tears. "We are all tired of this yoke."

Gabriel Boric, the leftist leader of Chile, called the results "difficult to believe," while U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Washington had "serious concerns" that the announced tally did not reflect the actual votes

or the will of the people. The U.S.-based Carter Center called on Venezuelan authorities to immediately publish the tallies of 30,000 individual voting machines. The center in Atlanta sent a small group to Venezuela for the election.

Opposition leader Maria Corina Machado said the margin of González's victory was "overwhelming," based on tallies the campaign received from representatives stationed at about 40% of ballot boxes.

Authorities postponed releasing the results from each of the 30,000 polling booths nationwide, promising only to do so in the "coming hours." The delay hampered attempts to verify the results. González was the unlikely of opposition standard bearers. The 74-year-old was unknown until he was tapped in April as a last-minute stand-in for opposition powerhouse Machado, who was blocked by the Maduro-controlled supreme court from running for any office for 15 years.

The delay in announcing a winner which came six hours after polls were supposed to close indicated a deep debate inside the government about how to proceed after Maduro's opponents came out early in the evening all but claiming victory.

Authorities set Sunday's election to coincide with what would have been the 70th birthday of former President Hugo Chávez, the revered leftist firebrand who died of cancer in 2013, leaving his Bolivarian revolution in the hands of Maduro. But Maduro and his United Socialist Party of Venezuela, which controls all branches of government, are more unpopular than ever among many voters who blame his policies for crushingly low wages that spurred hunger, crippled the oil industry and separated families due to migration.

The president's pitch this election was one of economic security, which he tried to sell with stories of entrepreneurship and references to a stable currency exchange and lower inflation rates. The International Monetary Fund forecasts the economy will grow 4% this year one of the fastest in Latin America after shrinking 71% from 2012 to 2020.

But most Venezuelans have not seen any improvement in their quality of life. Many earn under \$200 a month, which means families struggle to afford essential items. Some work second and third jobs. A basket of food staples to feed a family of four for a month costs an estimated \$385.

The opposition managed to line up behind a single candidate after years of intra-party divisions and election boycotts that torpedoed their ambitions to topple the ruling party.

A former lawmaker, Machado swept the opposition's October primary with over 90% of the vote.

After she was blocked from joining the presidential race, she chose a college professor as her substitute on the ballot, but the National Electoral Council also barred her from registering. That's when González, a political newcomer, was chosen.

The opposition has tried to seize on the huge inequalities arising from the crisis, during which Venezuelans abandoned their country's currency, the bolivar, for the U.S. dollar. □



## Due to construction work, Aruba Airport announces a temporary change in the parking entrance

Aruba Airport Authority (AAA) informs all passengers and visitors of AUA Airport of some temporary changes in the parking and car rental drop-off areas due to some maintenance and construction work.

Starting Monday, July 29, for a period of one week, ending on August 2, access to the public parking and car rental drop-off areas will be undergoing construction.

A temporary entrance will be set up to ensure continuous access to the parking area and the car rental



drop-off area during the construction period. Users will need to follow the temporary signs that will indicate how to reach the new entrance for parking and car rental drop-off.

Aruba Airport Authority is committed to ensuring that this disruption is minimal and thanks everyone for their patience and cooperation during the construction period. These improvements are part of our ongoing efforts to enhance the infrastructure and overall experience at the airport. □

## Craving a late-night snack? We got you covered!

(Oranjestad)—After a night out it's custom to grab yourself a late-night snack on the road. Here in Aruba, there are dozens of food trucks that you can visit to enjoy a late-night bite. Here are a few that can be found in the down town/hotel area.

### Chalo burger



Chalo burger is a favorite among locals, and it's due to its popularity that it has branched out to different parts on the island. One of its main locations is in Palm Beach, near the hotel area. Chalo offers a variety of fast-food meals, like hamburgers, hotdogs, loaded fries and more! A popular dish among locals is the Salchipapa: loaded fries with sausages, cheese and a mix of sweet and savory sauce. Perfect for those late-night cravings!

Chalo is open Wednesdays through Mondays from 7pm to 12 am (Fridays till 1am), and is located at Palm Beach 178 (a little past the roundabout near the Piazza Gianni's). Other Locations include Tanki Leendert and Savaneta.

### Julio's Corner

Situated in a nice little corner off the highway, Julio's Corner has a huge menu comprised of different dishes and snacks, all made with a Venezuelan twist! From arepa's to chicken wings, to pizzas and burg-



ers, Julio's Corner has it all to satisfy your taste! Editor's choice for what to get at Julio's Corner is the quesadilla, which comes with a side of fries.

Julio's Corner is open Mondays through Saturday from 6pm to 2am (Fridays and Saturdays up to 4am), and is located in the parking lot of the Eagle Bowling Palace, right on the other side of the road from the Sasaki gas station.

### Habibi Express

Habibi Express is a Lebanese food truck stand, one of very few food trucks on the island to sell Mediterranean food. Located right at the entrance of The Local Market near the cruise ship port, here you can



fill your stomach (and heart) with a variety of options like shawarmas, doners, kapsalons and more, all 100% halal. When asked, the chef there recommends all foodies to try their lamb shawarma, as it's a favorite among guests.

Habibi Express is open every day from 5pm to 12am. While you're there, how about a picture with the genie? □

## Aruba to me

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## Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitors at Marriott's Aruba Ocean Club!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Emerald Ambassadors of Aruba. The honorees were respectively honored with a certificate for their years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honorary certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

### The three levels of honor are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

### The honorees were:

Emerald Ambassadors

**Mr. Gerard & Mrs. Jean Kane from Parsippany New Jersey, United States.**

Mr. Jorgino Willems representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of Marriott Aruba Ocean Club bestowed the certificate upon the honorees, presented them with gifts, and thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination, as their home away from home.

### The top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the honorees were:

- Aruba's people.
- Aruba's beach.
- Aruba's weather.
- Aruba's restaurants.
- Aruba is safe.

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees for their continued visits to the "One Happy Island".



## Aruba's Nature is to be Cherished

**ST. CRUZ —** The national park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There is numerous wildlife to discover like for example the sea turtle who lays his eggs on the park's beaches. There are more places on the island that are a preserved area like the Bubali Plas which is a bird sanctuary.



programs and fun activities is available.

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the islands past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of educational and informative

Did you know that four of the in total seven species of sea turtle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches? In the national park, a Least Tern (*Sterna antillarum*) keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place below on the beach: a majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heads

back to sea after laying her eggs, while another nest laid 2 months ago by the same female hatches. A very rare occurrence of daytime nesting and hatching. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

age of the pink bird is courtesy of Michiel Oversteegen of the Aruba Birdlife Conservation. This important foundation showcases and builds awareness of Aruba's birds and other native flora and fauna. You may have seen a 'pink cloud' lately at the Bubali or Spanish Lagoon Wetlands areas? It's most likely to be Roseate Spoonbills (*Ajaia ajaja*) or 'Chucharon Cora' as they are known in Papiamentu. This unusual looking bird forages in shallow muddy water while sweeping its flattened bill from side to side to catch small fish, crustaceans and other aquatic invertebrates. The Roseate Spoonbill remains an uncommon sight as they are vulnerable to degradation of feeding and nesting habitats (Wetlands). (Source: arikok national park)

a part of what Aruba's nature has to offer. We cannot stress enough to go, see for yourself. The island has the most beautiful beaches but it is also worthwhile to go beyond this and get an idea of our entire island. Lately there is a discussion going on about the effect certain activities have on our nature, for example the ATV vehicles cause a lot of dust, noise and leave tire tracks. Animals live in these areas where the vehicles run, often with high speed and with detrimental consequences to flora and fauna. Motorized vehicles are forbidden to drive on the sand dunes in the Northern part of the island and all beaches in Aruba are forbidden for any motorized vehicle. Treasure our island to enjoy it like you do: as a tropical and natural paradise. We truly appreciate it!

### Bubali Magic

This beautiful close-up im-

The aforementioned is just





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## Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitors at Aruba Beach Club!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Emerald Ambassadors of Aruba. The honorees were respectively honored with a certificate for their years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

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Emerald Ambassador (35>years

consecutively visiting Aruba)

**The honorees were:**

Emerald Ambassadors

**Mr. Glenn & Mrs. Rafaela Sewrajs-**  
**ing from Curacao.**

Mr. Jorgino Willems representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of Aruba Beach Club bestowed the certificate upon the honorees, presented them with gifts, and thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination, as their home away from home.

The top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the honorees were:

- "Vacation, Family and Friends"
- "Very friendly staff"



- Aruba's Beaches

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express

our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees for their continued visits to the "One Happy Island". □

## Papiamento words and phrases you may want to know!

(Oranjestad)—Aruba is a melting pot of different nationalities, cultures and languages. Primarily for this reason, the average Aruban can understand and speak Dutch, English and Spanish relatively well. However, as much as we pride ourselves in being able to communicate with almost everyone, we cherish our native tongue Papiamento above all else. Want to learn some common words in our language? Here are a few basic words and phrases that can get you a hat tip from an Aruban.

When you arrive at the airport in Aruba, one of the first words in Papiamento you may encounter is "Bon bini." Bon bini in Papiamento means welcome, and is probably the most famous Papiamento word for tourists.

**Hi! Bye!**

To be fair, there is no unique way to say "hello" in Papiamento. At

least, not officially. We often just use the English "hello" or "hey", or Dutch "hallo" to greet someone. We do however, always follow it up with "con bay?" or "con ta?" Con bay is a shortened version of "con ta bay?", which essentially means "how are you?"

The word "con" in Papiamento means "how?" and is pronounced with a rounder "o" sounds, like in the English word "cone". "Ta bay" refers to how you are doing.

When we say goodbye, we use the word "ayo" (not like the Ayo Rock Formation, but also...kinda?). We may also use "te oro", which means "see you later".

**Greetings during the day**

Most, if not all, languages have different ways to greet according to the time of day, and Papiamento is no different. Since Papiamento is heavily influences from Portuguese

and Spanish, some of these phrases may look very familiar.

1. Bon dia is used in the morning, up to about noon. Bon dia essentially means good morning. The word "bon" means "good", and while "dia" does not directly mean "morning" in English, it is used often to refer to the morning time.
2. Bon tardi. In the afternoon to early evening hours, we use "bon tardi" to greet people, which means "good afternoon". "Tardi" actually comes from the word "atardi", which directly translates to "afternoon". However, the shortened "tardi" is used to keep the rhythm on the phrase. And the same could be said for our last greeting of the day.
3. Bon nochi. You guessed it, "bon nochi" means "good night". Just like "tardi", "nochi" is actually the shortened version of the word "anochi".

**Yes...no...maybe?**

The affirmative and negative expression is very simple in Papiamento. Just like Spanish, our yeses are "si" and our no's are "no". Pretty easy right? If you want to gain some extra points from younger locals, you can also say "se", which is a more casual affirmative used mostly by the younger generation. However, do note: some older generations may find this improper and not respectful, so keep that in mind.

**Thanks man...**

Lastly, a word that we can also say more often is "danki", which means literally "thank you". "Danki" is derived from the Dutch word "bedankt". Though we don't really have a translation for "I appreciate it" in English, we do use "masha danki" to convey the message. "Masha" means "a lot" or "very", so "masha danki" means "thank you very much". □



**Did you know about...**

## Basic driving rules on Aruba (part 1)



**(Oranjestad)—Have you ever felt confused when you're driving on the highways or backstreets of Aruba? Then we present a simple guide to some of the basic rules of Aruban traffic, along with some tips for things to look out for.**

### Speed limit

Legally, the speed limit on the four-lane highways is 80 km/h. This speed limit also counts for the main roads that are connected to the highways. The minimum speed is 50 km/h. Most people drive around 60 km/h on the main roads and about 70 km/h on the highways. There are also areas that indicate a speed limit on a sign; these are usually around populated and school areas.

The four-lane highways contain the left-lane, also known as the "fast" lane for each direction. Here is where vehicles can drive up to the maximum speed. However, legally it is not permitted to drive for long periods of time on the left lane. This lane is primarily designed for drivers to switch lanes before a roundabout, for example, if your exit on the roundabout is on your far left. The general lane to drive in—both at maximum and minimum speed—is on the right lane.

### Roundabouts

Speaking of roundabouts, it is important to know where you have to enter and drive on the roundabout to make your exit. A good rule of thumb is to count the exits starting from your right side. So, exit 1 would be on your right; exit 2 would be straight ahead; exit 3 would be on your far left and exit 4 would lead to the road paralleled to the one you're on, heading in the other direction.

Most roundabouts have these 4 exits, so they are relatively simple. When you're driving on the four-lane highway, it is important to know when to switch to the left lane to make your exit: if your exit is on your far left (exit 3), then you need to switch to the left lane on the highway before nearing the roundabout so you can take the path that leads you directly to your

exit. If your exit is on your right or if you're going straight ahead, you can keep driving in the right lane of the highway.

It's also important to know that vehicles about to enter the roundabout must yield to those already on it. A good rule of thumb is to look out if someone is coming from your left side.

However, other roundabouts can be quite tricky to navigate...

### Watty Vos Boulevard (the "paperclip" roundabout)

Probably the biggest roundabout on the island, the "paperclip" roundabout on the Watty Vos Boulevard is one of the trickier roundabouts that could—and has—caused confused among both tourists and locals. However, once you take a good look at it, it's fairly simple. The basis is just the same as a regular roundabout (left exit? left lane! etc.), but instead of having four different exits like on a regular roundabout,

now you have two extra; one on the right and the other on the left side of the roundabout. The rules don't change at all, you just have to keep an extra eye open.

### Airport roundabout

Ah, yes. The infamous airport roundabout. The favorite roundabout amongst local, because of its easy (hard) lanes that never (always) cause confusion among drivers. Sarcasm aside, this roundabout can be tricky to enter, especially when you're driving from the direction of the airport heading. When you're driving away from the airport reaching the roundabout, you'll be faced with three lanes. The far right lane is to take the exit 1 out heading east (right lane of highway). The middle exit is used for exit 1 (left lane of highway), 2 and 3. The far left exit is used to only exit on exit 3 (left lane of highway) and 4.

### "Las Americas" roundabout

The Las Americas roundabout is located near the Talk of the Town hotel, west from the airport roundabout. This roundabout may look like a regular roundabout—and for the most part, it is. However, when you are driving from the east going in the direction of town, please take note that there are two exits on your right.

When you're driving towards this roundabout, you'll notice that the road becomes wider, splitting into two lanes. The right lane is used to take the first and second exit on the right. If you want to exit straight ahead, you must drive on the left lane!

It's always scary to drive in new places where the traffic may look and work differently, but once you get it right once, you'll get the hang of it in no time. Additionally, all roundabouts and roads on Aruba have signs and arrows painted on the road to help guide you. So take your time, keep your eyes open and don't forget to wear a seat belt! ☐





## Fruit Loose & Veggie Boost: Aruban fruits and vegetables

**Fresh fruits make a tropical holiday's picture complete. Whether you see the mangoes hanging in the trees or the fresh fruit cocktail on the side table of your pool bed, the link is there: you are in the tropics. Aruba grows her own fruits and veggies and there are some pretty out-of-space local species you may never had heard of, but really healthy and delicious.**

### Mispel

This is a fruit with a character (5-10 cm/2-4 inches). It does not ripe until it is picked or falls off the tree. Mispel is hard with a sandpaper like texture when immature, soft and juicy when ripe. It's technically a berry, but contains a skin similar to that of a kiwi. It's grainy and sweet, with a light, musky flavor. The sap or gum from the tree is also a source of 'chicle' the original ingredient used to make chewing gum. Rich in tannins, antioxidants shown to contain anti-inflammatory compounds, and vitamin C, essential for healthy immune function. Season: year-round.

### Kenepa



Ovoid green fruit that grows in bunches on trees up to 30m high. The fruit is related to the lychee and have tight, thin but rigid skins. Inside the skin is the tart, tangy, or sweet pulp of the fruit covering a large seed. The pulp is usually cream or orange colored. Kenepa strengthens the immune system, and prevents the reproduction of bacteria and viruses in the body. This fruit is highly recommended to treat lung infections and urinary tract infections. It also helps to cure insomnia and rejuvenates the nervous system. Season: the fruit typically ripen during the summer.

### Druif



There is no chance you did not bump into one of the sea grape trees while spending your vacation on Aruba. The sea grape plant is often used in ocean-side landscaping in sandy soil right on the beach and it produces clusters of

fruit that resemble grapes. Are sea grapes edible? Yes, they are. Animals enjoy sea grapes and humans can eat them as well, and they are used to make jam. They contain very low calories and sugar, enabling good bacterium to digest food and excrete waste quickly which is effective in preventing constipation. Season: Sep-Oct.

### Shimarucu



Maybe Aruba's most popular wild fruit tree. You may have noticed cars at the side of the road and people picking those red berries. Well, that's Shimarucu. The local habit to stop for these delicious fruits goes from generation to generation. Its fruit's degree of sour depends on the amount of rain it gets. Red Shimarucus tend to taste better than orange. The fruit has super power: a true vitamin bomb. Adults only need to eat 3-4 of these berries to meet their daily recommended amount of Vitamin C. Season: Rainy months (Oct-Jan).

### Tamarind



A delicious, sweet fruit that has a wide variety of uses and applications, both for medicinal and culinary purposes. It is a medium-sized bushy tree with evergreen leaves and fruit that develops in pods characterized by long, brown shells. Inside is a sticky, fleshy, juicy pulp, which is the Tamarind fruit. Both sweet and sour in taste, the fruit contains a significant level of vitamin C, as well as vitamin E, B vitamins, calcium, iron, phosphorous, potassium, manganese, and dietary fiber. There are also a number of organic compounds that make tamarind a powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory agent. Season: March.

When it comes to veggies the island certainly offers a home-grown selection. They taste delicious and have their specific talents to boost your immune system. Start the day with a 'batida' (smoothie) enriched with a local veggie touch or select your restaurant that offers local vegetable dishes to get the real pure taste of it.

### Comcomber chiquito

This is a sort of local squash, but looks like a cucumber with prickly skin. The taste however is bitterer than the cucumber and the vegetable is smaller in size but bigger in width. Inside is a soft, fleshy pulp and seeds, just like the cucumber. Comcomber chiquito is grown in the island and used in salads and 'stoba' (stew) or on its own in vinegar. The veggie contains multiple B vitamins, including vitamin B1, vitamin B5, and vitamin B7 (biotin). B vitamins are known to help ease feelings of anxiety and buffer some of the damaging effects of stress. Additionally this veggie is rich in two of the most basic elements needed for healthy digestion: water and fiber. Season: year-round.

### Yambo

Family of Okra, also known as 'lady's fingers': a green flowering plant. Okra belongs to the same plant family as hibiscus and cotton. A classic favorite dish in Aruba is Sopi di yambo. It has long been favored as a food for the health-conscious. It contains potassium, vitamin B, vitamin C, folic acid, and calcium. It's low in calories and has a high dietary fiber content. Recently, a new benefit of including okra in your diet is being considered. Okra has been suggested to help manage blood sugar in cases of type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes. Season: year-round.

### Bonch'i Cunucu

A long, small bean, boiled for a side dish or snack. Long beans have a chewy, crunchy texture—more so than snap beans—and a flavor reminiscent of the dry navy bean or asparagus. Besides stir-fry, soups and salads, the long bean is a good choice for stewing, braising (to remain chewy and firm), sautéing, shallow frying, and deep frying. With cooking, the long bean's bean flavor intensifies. Long beans are low in calories, about 45 calories per cup, and rich in vitamin A and also contain vitamin C and potassium. Season: year-round.

### Pampuna



In the endless summer of Caribbean living we only have to concern ourselves with a wet season and a dry season. Still we do indulge heavily in the pleasures of pumpkin and enjoy Caribbean pumpkin recipes year round. A popular dish in Aruban restaurants is Sopa Di Pampuna, don't miss it. This dish is made of pumpkin soup, and parsley. Pumpkins are rich in flavonoid polyphenolic antioxidants such as xanthin, lutein and carotenes and also contain vitamins. Pumpkin seeds are a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins, minerals and proteins. Pumpkins are used to make desserts, breads and soups. □



# CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

## ACROSS

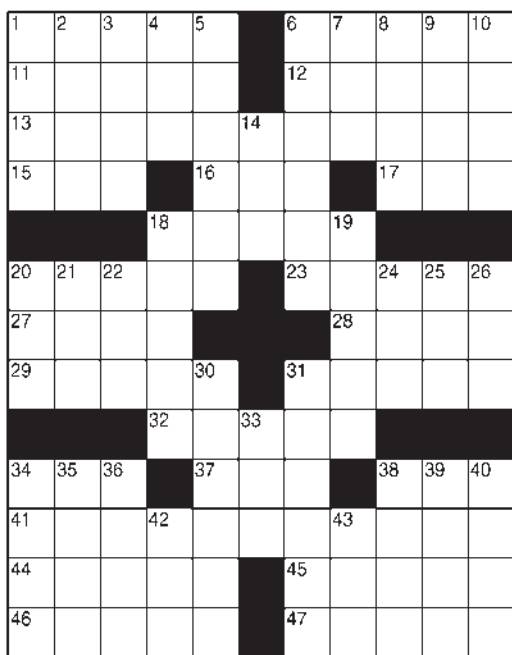
- 1 Stopped moving
- 6 Varnish ingredient
- 11 Column style
- 12 Yucca's kin
- 13 Nitrous oxide
- 15 Harris and Asner
- 16 Archaic
- 17 Colony member
- 18 Under
- 20 Team
- 23 Like some drinks
- 27 For us
- 28 Band sample
- 29 Skeleton makeup
- 31 Track great Owens
- 32 Stylist's spot
- 34 Mournful
- 37 Debt reminder
- 38 Chore
- 41 Real pity
- 44 Wide awake
- 45 Game piece
- 46 Methods
- 47 Wasn't thrifty

## DOWN

- 1 Do clerical work
- 2 Driving site
- 3 Burden
- 4 Make a sharp turn
- 5 Reverberated
- 6 Unpredictable
- 7 Easter find
- 8 Long story
- 9 Infamous czar
- 10 High home
- 14 Suffering corners
- 18 Diamond
- 19 Make broader
- 20 Cry loudly
- 21 Status —
- 22 Coffee dispenser
- 24 Crosses out
- 25 Print units
- 26 Female rabbit
- 30 New Orleans team
- 31 Knights' fights
- 33 Lumber unit
- 34 Con
- 35 Singer Guthrie
- 36 Not natural, in a way
- 38 Boxer La Motta
- 39 Sign
- 40 Flexed
- 42 Hot blood
- 43 Bunny move



## Yesterday's answer



5-7

AXYDLBAAXR  
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

5-7

## CRYPTOQUOTE

RI PIMD FB RI QFAD EITJBDGN  
RI RPD NTRTJD — UXC RPUR  
SIYYFRYDXR RI RPD NTRTJD FB  
VPUR YUODB RPD MJDBDXR  
FXPUHFRUHGD. — JDHDSSU  
BIGXFR

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: MAY, MORE THAN ANY OTHER MONTH OF THE YEAR, WANTS US TO FEEL MOST ALIVE. — FENNEL HUDSON

## Cruise ship Schedule: July 30 2024

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
TUE	30	CELEBRITY BEYOND	08.00	21.00	C	1

## Cruise ship Schedule: August 6 - 14 2024

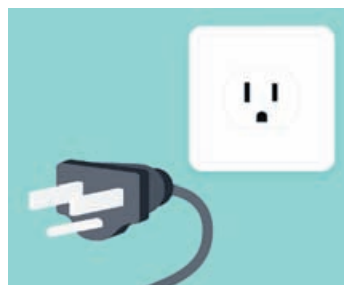
			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
TUE	06	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS	08.00	20.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	22.00	C	1
		CARNIVAL MARDI GRAS	13.00	23.00	I	1
WED	07	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	09.00	21.00	C	1
TUE	13	CELEBRITY BEYOND	08.00	21.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL CELEBRATION	08.00	22.00	C	1
		CARNIVAL VISTA	13.00	23.00	I	1
THU	14	ENCHANTED PRINCESS	08.00	18.00	C	1

## Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

lets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

### Electrical power



Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of out-

### Drinking water



The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

### Supermarket hours



Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

### Safety



Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

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24/7



# Infants' tongue-tie may be overdiagnosed and needlessly treated, American Academy of Pediatrics says



This combination of photos provided by Dr. Maya Bunik in July 2024, shows a baby with ankyloglossia where the tongue does not extend beyond the gums, left, and a baby with an indentation at the tip of a the tongue which may be a sign of ankyloglossia.

By **MIKE STOBBE**  
**AP Medical Writer**

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Tongue-tie a condition in infants that can affect breastfeeding — may be overdiagnosed in the U.S. and too often treated with unnecessary surgery, a prominent doctors' group said Monday. The American Academy of Pediatrics is the latest, and largest, medical society to sound an alarm about the increasing use of scissors or lasers to cut away some infants' tongue tissue when breastfeeding is difficult. "It's almost an epidemic," said Dr. Maya Bunik, a Colorado-based co-author of the report.

Experts say there isn't a good count of how many infants each year are being treated for tongue-tie with surgery, though Bunik believes the annual tally may exceed 100,000. Research suggests many of those treatments are not necessary, she added.

The academy's new report encourages pediatricians and other medical professionals to consider nonsurgical options to address breastfeeding problems. The report cites a study that suggests less than half of the kids with the characteristics of tongue-tie actually have difficulty breastfeeding. Ankyloglossia, or "tongue-tie," occurs when an infant

is born with a tight or short band of tissue that tethers the bottom of the tongue's tip to the floor of the mouth. The condition can make it hard for the infant to extend and lift their tongue to grasp a nipple and draw milk which in turn can be painful for the mother. Doctors say it's critical to get breastfeeding on track in the first three to four weeks, and surveys indicate most parents want to breastfeed, so it's natural that they want a quick solution to a problem, Bunik said.

Ankyloglossia diagnoses have been increasing worldwide, though there is no uniform diagnostic crite-

ria for this condition and no consensus on how to treat it. One common approach is to cut the tissue with scissors, but dentists increasingly are using lasers to vaporize the tissue some charging \$800 or more.

But the procedures can cause pain and sore mouths, potentially deterring babies from trying to breastfeed, Bunik said.

"The practice (of treating tongue-tie) got to be very common without a lot of good data," said Wisconsin pediatrician Dr. Jennifer Thomas, who also co-authored the report.

The report also recommends lactation experts, pediatri-

cians and surgeons and other medical professionals work with parents to evaluate possible reasons for breastfeeding challenges and make the best treatment decision. The American Academy of Pediatrics, which has 67,000 members who specialize in treating children, started working on the report in 2015 after some pediatricians began to notice that an increasing number of patients were going to dentists to get treatment for tongue-tie, Thomas said. Pediatricians were finding out after the surgeries. □

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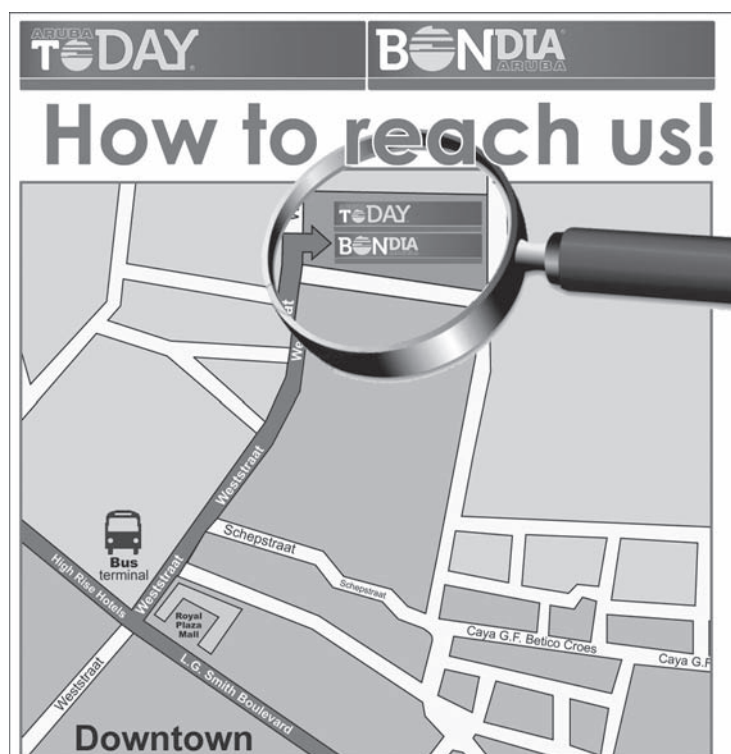
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# A parody ad shared by Elon Musk clones Kamala Harris' voice, raising concerns about AI in politics

By **ALI SWENSON**  
**Associated Press**

**NEW YORK (AP)** — A video that uses an artificial intelligence voice-cloning tool to mimic the voice of Vice President Kamala Harris saying things she did not say is raising concerns about the power of AI to mislead with Election Day about three months away.

The video gained attention after tech billionaire Elon Musk shared it on his social media platform X on Friday without explicitly noting it was originally released as parody.

By late Sunday, Musk had clarified the video was intended as satire, pinning the original creator's post to his profile and using a pun to make the point that parody is not a crime.

The video uses many of the same visuals as a real ad that Harris, the likely Democratic president nominee, released launching her campaign. But the fake ad swaps out Harris' voice-over audio with an AI-generated voice that convincingly impersonates Harris.

"I, Kamala Harris, am your Democrat candidate for president because Joe Biden finally exposed his senility at the debate," the AI voice says in the video. It claims Harris is a "diversity hire" because she is a woman and a person of color, and it says she doesn't know "the first thing about running the country." The video retains "Harris for



**Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk addresses the European Jewish Association's conference in Krakow, Poland, Jan. 22, 2024.**

**Associated Press**

President" branding. It also adds in some authentic past clips of Harris.

Mia Ehrenberg, a Harris campaign spokesperson, said in an email to The Associated Press: "We believe the American people want the real freedom, opportunity and security Vice President Harris is offering; not the fake, manipulated lies of Elon Musk and Donald Trump." The widely shared video is an example of how lifelike AI-generated images, videos or audio clips have been utilized both to poke fun and to mislead about politics as the United States draws closer to the presidential election. It exposes how, as high-quality AI tools have become far

more accessible, there remains a lack of significant federal action to regulate their use, leaving rules guiding AI in politics largely to states and social media platforms. The video also raises questions about how to best handle content that blurs the lines of what is considered an appropriate use of AI, particularly if it falls into the category of satire. The original user who posted the video, a YouTuber known as Mr Reagan, disclosed from the beginning both on YouTube and on X that the manipulated video is a parody. Yet Musk's initial post with the video, which had far wider reach with 130 million views on X, according to the

platform, only included the caption "This is amazing" with a laughing emoji.

Over the weekend, before Musk clarified on his profile that the video was a joke, some participants in X's "community note" feature suggested labeling his post as manipulated. No such label has been added to it, even as Musk has separately posted about the parody video.

Some users online have questioned whether his initial post might violate X's policies, which say users "may not share synthetic, manipulated, or out-of-context media that may deceive or confuse people and lead to harm."

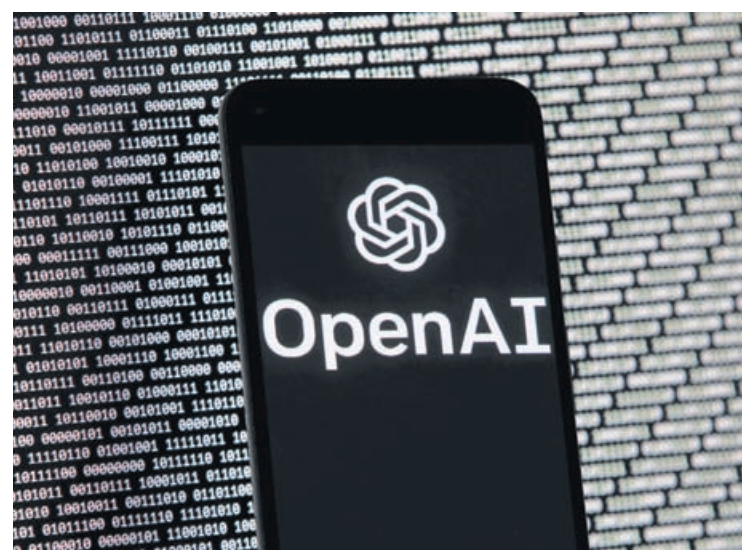
The policy has an excep-

tion for memes and satire as long as they do not cause "significant confusion about the authenticity of the media."

Chris Kohls, the man behind the Mr Reagan online persona, pointed an AP reporter to a YouTube video he posted early Monday responding to the ordeal. In the YouTube video, he confirmed he used AI to make the fake ad and argued that it was obviously parody, with or without a label. Musk endorsed Trump, the Republican former president and current nominee, earlier this month. He didn't respond to an emailed request for comment.

Two experts who specialize in AI-generated media reviewed the fake ad's audio and confirmed that much of it was generated using AI technology.

One of them, University of California, Berkeley, digital forensics expert Hany Farid, said the video shows the power of generative AI and deepfakes. "The AI-generated voice is very good," he said in an email. "Even though most people won't believe it is VP Harris' voice, the video is that much more powerful when the words are in her voice." He said generative AI companies that make voice-cloning tools and other AI tools available to the public should do better to ensure their services are not used in ways that could harm people or democracy. □



**The OpenAI logo appears on a mobile phone in front of a computer screen with random binary data, March 9, 2023, in Boston.**

**Associated Press**

## OpenAI tests ChatGPT-powered search engine that could compete with Google

**SAN FRANCISCO (AP)** — OpenAI is testing a ChatGPT-powered search engine that could put the artificial intelligence company in direct competition with search giant Google and affect the flow of internet traffic seeking news and other timely information. San Francisco-based OpenAI said Thursday it is releasing a preview of the

SearchGPT feature to get feedback from a small group of users and publishers. Google upended its search engine in May with AI-generated written summaries now frequently appearing at the top of search results. The summaries aim to quickly answer a user's search query so that they don't necessarily need to click a link and visit

another website for more information.

Google's makeover came after a year of testing with a small group of users, but still resulted in errors showing the risks of ceding the search for information to AI chatbots.

OpenAI's close business partner, Microsoft, is also testing AI summaries on its Bing search engine. □



# Verstappen to regroup during F1 summer break with McLaren and Mercedes right on his tailpipe

By JOSEPH WILSON

Associated Press

BARCELONA, Spain (AP) —

What a difference a year can make in Formula 1.

Yes, Max Verstappen is still on pace for yet another world title — it will be No. 4 in a row for the Dutchman unless Red Bull self-implodes.

But no longer is it a foregone conclusion that Verstappen will dominate the competition and, let's face it, bore many fans looking for him to at least be made to sweat. F1 instead has been lit up this summer as Red Bull's speed advantage has evaporated thanks to huge improvements from more than one rival.

The four cars fielded by Mercedes and McLaren have emerged as threats to Verstappen, while Ferrari's Prancing Horses are also right there. That has produced thrillingly unpredictable races like Sunday's Belgian Grand Prix where Verstappen finished fourth. A week before that, McLaren's Oscar Piastri and Lando Norris made it a one-two at Budapest, while Verstappen finished fifth. The seven winners in 13 races after the Hungarian GP had already made this season the most competitive since 2012. "It's great. It's really fantastic, I think, for the sport to be having such close teams and



Crew prepare the car of Red Bull driver Max Verstappen of the Netherlands prior to the start of the Formula One Grand Prix at the Spa-Francorchamps racetrack in Spa, Belgium, Sunday, July 28, 2024.

Associated Press

drivers," said Lewis Hamilton, who was declared the winner in Belgium after Mercedes teammate George Russell was disqualified for his car being underweight. "The pedigree of drivers at the top today are really elite and amazing," the former seven-time world champion said.

Lost advantage

Last year, Verstappen recorded an eighth straight victory by finishing first at the Belgian GP and entered

the summer break with a 125-point lead over teammate Sergio Pérez. Verstappen would go on to make it an F1 record 10 wins in a row and 19 wins in 22 races for the season. He won 15 races in 2022.

Verstappen appeared to be off to another title march this year after winning four of the first five races. But since then, he has just three wins in the last nine grand prix and has gone four consecutive races without a victory for the first

time since 2020, before he became the dominant force in F1.

This time, Verstappen enters the summer break with a 78-point advantage over McLaren's Lando Norris with 10 races to go. The season restarts at the Dutch GP on Aug. 25.

"We are looking forward to the summer break and having a bit of time to relax, but at the same time we are committed to being better and faster and are trying to

find solutions as we go into the rest of the season," Verstappen said after the race at Spa.

"We had a great start to the season, our last few races have been a bit more difficult, but we have been pushing to find a solution how to do that," Verstappen said. "Next race is obviously my home race in Zandvoort. It will be a tough battle and it will be all about tire management, but it will be great to be in front of my home crowd again."

Multiple threats

Mercedes enters the break on a high with three wins in the last four races. Hamilton snapped a long dry spell dating to 2021 when he won the British GP in early July. George Russell followed that up with a victory in Austria. They thought they had a one-two at Belgium, before Russell was disqualified.

That let Hamilton, who is bound for Ferrari next season, take his record win haul to 105 grand prix.

"We didn't expect to be competing with the McLarens or the Red Bulls at this point in the season, you know, with how we started off," Hamilton said. "So for us to now have closed up and be, it's going to be one hell of a second half of the season for sure." □

# Texans' Denico Autry suspended 6 games for violating NFL's policy on performance-enhancers

HOUSTON (AP) — Houston Texans defensive lineman Denico Autry was suspended for the first six games of the regular season on Monday for violating the NFL's policy on performance-enhancers.

Autry denied he knowingly ingested a banned substance but said he would accept the suspension. Autry said he discovered the pharmacy that filled a prescription for him had "intentionally, recklessly, or negligently" included a banned substance.

Autry is allowed to participate in preseason practices and games. His first regular-season availability will be

Oct. 20 at Green Bay. Autry apologized to the Texans organization, teammates and fans for any distraction his positive test causes.

Autry, 34, has 59 sacks in 10 NFL seasons. He had a career-high 11 1/2 last season for the Tennessee Titans and signed a two-year, \$20 million free-agent contract with the Texans in March.

"Over the course of my 10-year NFL career, I have never engaged in the use of performance-enhancing drugs," Autry said in a statement. "Over that period, I have been subject to countless tests, none of which have ever returned a positive result. I was, there-

fore, stunned this offseason when I learned that one of my tests returned a positive result."

Autry said his attorney provided the NFL with documentation from his physicians establishing he neither asked for nor was prescribed any banned substances.

"It was important to me that the NFL know that I did not intentionally or even knowingly ingest a banned substance," Autry said. "I understand, however, that under the NFL's policies, ultimate responsibility for what enters my body rests with me. To that end, while I intend to explore

legal options pertaining to the circumstances that resulted in my positive test, I

have accepted the NFL's punishment of a six-game suspension." □



Tennessee Titans defensive end Denico Autry (96) runs onto the field during a NFL football game against the Jacksonville Jaguars, Nov. 19, 2023, in Jacksonville, Fla.

Associated Press



# Djokovic beats rival Nadal at the Paris Olympics in their 60th and possibly last head-to-head match

By **HOWARD FENDRICH**  
AP Tennis Writer

**PARIS (AP)** — Novak Djokovic, who won, and Rafael Nadal, who lost, met at the net and hugged after playing at the Paris Olympics in the 60th and quite possibly last installment of a record-breaking and often riveting rivalry between two tennis greats who share a mutual respect if not a close friendship.

This 6-1, 6-4 victory for Djokovic came in only the second round of the Summer Games instead of a Grand Slam final, like nine previous head-to-head encounters and it was not the most scintillating contest, either, other than for a 20-minute interlude in the second set, when Nadal's final push made things briefly competitive after he ceded 10 of the initial 11 games. Afterward, neither Nadal, who is 38, nor Djokovic, 37, was willing to concede they won't play each other again, even if that seems likely. Nadal certainly seems as if he could be close to retirement; he's had two injury-filled seasons, needed hip surgery a little more than a year ago, and spoke in 2023 about 2024 being his farewell.

But he's not done at these Olympics, pairing with Carlos Alcaraz in doubles for Spain, and said Monday



**Serbia's Novak Djokovic, right, hugs Spain's Rafael Nadal after their men's singles second round match at the Roland Garros stadium at the 2024 Summer Olympics, Monday, July 29, 2024, in Paris, France.**

he's a bit tired of getting asked every day about his future. "I cannot live every single day with the feeling that it's going to be, or not going to be, my last match. I come here, I try my best, I play. And when I decide to stop playing, or when I decide to keep going, I will let you know. I don't know," Nadal said. "If I feel that I am not competitive enough to keep going or physically I am not ... ready to keep going, I will stop, and I will let you know."

What was clear for the first 1 1/2 hours against Djokovic is that Nadal was diminished,

nowhere near the skilled and ever-hustling version of himself that won a record 14 French Open trophies on the same red clay at Roland Garros that is hosting Summer Games matches. He acknowledged as much after leaving Court Philippe Chatrier, where fans repeatedly tried to encourage him with chants of "Ra-fa! Ra-fa!"

"Playing against Novak without creating damage to him, and without having the legs of 20 years ago, is almost impossible," said Nadal, whose right thigh has been taped up for all

of his matches in Paris.

Djokovic was asked whether this might mark the end of head-to-head competition between the pair.

"Of course it can be, but we don't know that. It really depends on many different factors," the Serbian said. "I just hope for the sake of our rivalry, and the sport, in general, that we'll get to face each other once, maybe a few times, on different surfaces, in different parts of the world, because I feel like it can only benefit the sport. But I don't know how he feels in his body, what his plans are."

**Associated Press**

Djokovic owns 24 Grand Slam titles, and Nadal 22, the two highest men's totals in the century-plus history of the sport. Both have been ranked No. 1, and no pair of men has played each other more often in the professional era. They are two-thirds of the so-called Big Three of men's tennis, along with Roger Federer, who retired with 20 Slam titles, a cohort that enjoyed unprecedented success and prompted endless debates about which is the "GOAT" "Greatest of All Time."

But Nadal, a gold medalist in singles and doubles at past Olympics, and Djokovic, who says adding a gold to his otherwise glittering resume is a priority, are accustomed to meeting and fans are accustomed to watching them in the latter stages of events. It happened much earlier this time because while Djokovic is the top seed at the Olympics, Nadal's ranking is outside the top 150 on account of a lack of matches.

The place was packed, from the press seats where there was jostling for space, to the highest spots in the upper deck, for what felt like a historic occasion. Rap- per Snoop Dogg sat beside tennis icon Billie Jean King; Vogue editor Anna Wintour was with film director Baz Luhrmann. □

## U.S., Japan figure skaters will finally get their 2022 Winter Olympics medals after Russia doping case



**Madison Chock and Evan Bates, of the United States, reacts after the team ice dance program during the figure skating competition at the 2022 Winter Olympics, Monday, Feb. 7, 2022, in Beijing.**

**Associated Press**

**PARIS (AP)** — U.S. and Japanese figure skaters finally have a date at the Paris Olympics next week to get their Beijing Winter Games medals exactly 2 1/2 years after they earned them in a team event upended by a Russian doping case.

A presentation ceremony for skating's team event from February 2022 will be held Aug. 7 at 5 p.m. in Paris, the International Olympic Committee said Monday. The U.S. and Japan placed second and third behind Russia but no team skating medals were awarded in Beijing because Russian teenage star Kamila Valieva within hours was implicated in a doping case that took almost two years to judge.

The U.S. skaters formally became Olympic champions after Russian appeals seeking to regain the title were dismissed last

week by the Court of Arbitration for Sport. The medals will be awarded beneath the Eiffel Tower at the Champions Park site where VIPs watched the Paris Olympics opening ceremony.

Valieva was disqualified from the Beijing Olympics and banned for four years by a CAS panel of judges in January.

The latest round of Russian appeals challenged how the International Skating Union amended the Beijing result after the January ruling. That left the Russians in third place and Canada fourth.

It wasn't immediately clear whether the bronze medals would also be presented in Paris. A Canadian appeal to be given the bronze is currently being judged by CAS, which held a hearing on July 22. □